



(U//FOUO) Standing Up the ODNI's Watch: An Interview with Dennis Chapman

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*(U//FOUO) SIDtoday interviewed the Director of the ODNI (Office of the Director of National Intelligence) Watch, **Dennis Chapman**, to learn about the Watch's status today and what lies ahead...*

- (U) Is an ODNI Watch in place yet?

(U) Yes, it's been up-and-running 24/7 since May 15th.

- (U) What is its job?

(U//FOUO) First let me say what it won't do -- the Watch will not task the Intelligence Community (IC). It has three main duties:

1. To alert the DNI, Deputy DNI, and the rest of the ODNI to important events worldwide that demand their attention;
2. Maintain situational awareness; and
3. Provide external communications capabilities for the ODNI.

We also periodically issue a 1 to 1-1/2 page report called the "State of the Community" that goes to the ODNI principals and highlights the intelligence communities response to specific developments.

- (U) Where is it located?

(U//FOUO) The Watch is currently operating from the National Counterterrorism Center at Liberty Crossing in McLean, Virginia. It's a fantastic facility, but only a temporary home. The Watch -- along with the DNI and PDDNI -- will move to offices within the Defense Intelligence Analysis Center at Bolling Air Force Base around March of next year. Eventually, the entire ODNI, to include the Watch, will acquire its own building and cease being a tenant of another agency as required in the Intelligence Reform legislation.

(U//FOUO) My deputy, [REDACTED], office manager [REDACTED], and I are working out of NSA HQ until we join the Watch at Bolling. We plan on retaining a beachhead here.

- (U) How does the Watch operate? Does it look at reporting from all of the IC agencies?

(U//FOUO) No, we didn't want to get bogged down in looking at mountains of reports. Instead, we're tipped by the preexisting IC watch centers - like NSOC, for example - to important developments. Doing business this way keeps us a very lean operation and allows us to monitor the IC response to events. In time, we expect to serve as a sort of umbrella operations center for the whole IC.

(U//FOUO) The IC watches have all been terrific in the way they've dealt with us. By the way, we try to deal **exclusively** with the watches, to ensure that everything funnels through them and that they are in the loop.

- (U) How big is the ODNI Watch?

(U//FOUO) Eventually it will be composed of 5 teams of 5 people each, from various agencies. It's important to note that they work together as a team, not just as representatives of their home agencies. An FBI special agent leads one team, a State Department employee has been a

tremendous asset... we're something of a poster child for how the IC can work together.

(U//FOUO) Each team has a Senior Watch Officer (DISES-level), an Executive Officer (a GS-11 or -12) and three watch officers at the GS-14 or GS-15 level. The watch operates on 12-hour shifts with an innovative schedule that the watch-standers like very much. A tour in the Center lasts 18 months and is considered a PCS.

(U//FOUO) There are also a few of us working as the "day staff" to support and manage the Watch. Right now there are just three of us, but I expect that number to grow eventually to about six.

(U//FOUO) We recently ran a vacancy announcement at NSA and throughout the community to fill expected vacancies. Although the announcement closed on September 15, if anyone is interested in learning more about the Watch and upcoming positions, they can contact [REDACTED] ([REDACTED]@nsa) or me [REDACTED]@nsa). Ideally, we're looking for people with watch experience, good writing and communications skills, an awareness of the IC, and perhaps some field experience.

- (U) How extensive are the computer linkages between the ODNI Watch and all of the IC agencies?

(U//FOUO) Our computer accesses are fairly good. Each watch-stander can log into the system of his home agency - so an NSA'er can access NSANet, for example. In the future, we hope that everyone on the Watch will be able to access networks belonging to all IC agencies. We also want to develop more collaborative tools that fuse data from various Community sources.

- (U) In the past, you have served as the Director of NSOC, the White House Situation Room and the Office of Intelligence Support at the State Department.. How different is this job -- Director, ODNI Watch Center -- from your earlier positions?

(U//FOUO) It's very different when you are starting something from scratch. It has its challenges and frustrations, but it's been very satisfying!

(U//FOUO) For more information on the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, please see:

[the JWICS or Intelink DNI homepage \("DNI Connection"\)](#);

or

the DNI homepage on the Internet at: www.DNI.gov.

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